

Margate Civic Society

(Founded 1968)

Registered Charity No. 257884



Spring 2020
Newsletter
Issue No. 398



Margate Civic Society is a
Founder Member
of Civic Voice

We have received thirteen nominations for Town Pride Awards this year and they are all shown on pages 2 & 3. The awards will be announced at our meeting on 14th May. Our Town Pride Awards evening is one of the highlights of our year and one not to be missed. Light refreshments will be provided as in previous years.

When your Editor included in our Autumn 2019 Newsletter an image of a drawing by William Crawford of 'The Old Town Hall' and asked readers if they could provide any information on the artist, the response was superb from our members. Firstly, Marion Simpson came up with an original drawing by the artist of the former Lloyds Bank building in Westgate-on-Sea (now the Piggybank Day Nursery) and a copy of a newspaper article (undated) about William Crawford seeking to complete a series of articles depicting historic buildings throughout Margate. Secondly, Richard Clements 'came up trumps' with a copy of the original leaflet which accompanied the Margate Civic Society William Crawford Memorial Exhibition held in Margate Library in 1986. The text from that leaflet, together with the drawing of the former Lloyds Bank at Westgate, is reproduced on page 8 of this issue. Richard Clements also kindly allowed a number of postcard-size reproductions of William (Bill) Crawford's sketches of Old Margate to be scanned and some of those are reproduced on page 14. Then to further add to the store of information on Bill Crawford, your Editor found a copy of the Mayor of Margate's official Christmas card from 1964 featuring the Tudor House on its front and that image, too, is reproduced in this issue on page 1.

It is always a challenge to fill each issue of our Newsletter with something new and it was no different this time. However, a chance visit to attend a talk in the meeting-room in the Margate Caves Visitor Centre last December provided the incentive to make a return visit to the Visitor Centre in order to 'go below' and see Margate Caves in their renovated state. That visit - followed by a return visit just a few days later - resulted in a sufficient number of photographs to fill a good number of pages of the Newsletter. A selection from those photos is reproduced on pages 10-12 of this issue.

It is planned that the next issue will contain an illustrated article on the story of Henrys from 1932 to date. Julian Poupard, a member of our Society, has very kindly allowed access to his large collection of photographs and ephemera relating to the original Henrys which was established by his father at 54 High Street, Margate in 1932. □

James Brazier
Newsletter Editor

Welcome to new members

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members who have recently joined the Society:

Fiona Sielski Waters
Brian Smith-Stewart
Mary Nimmin

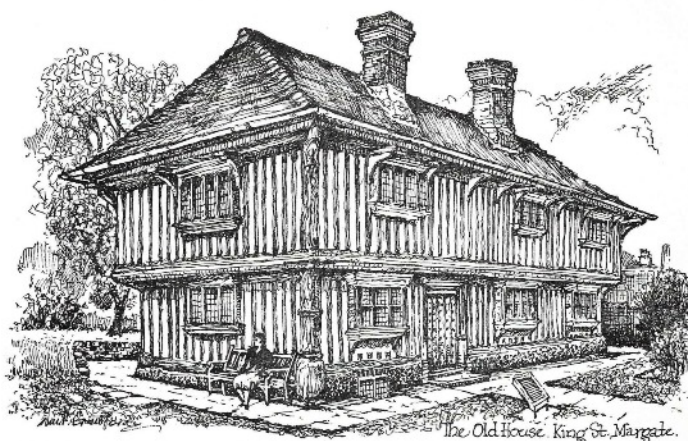
Sally Whitworth
Membership Secretary

Civic Day 2020

Saturday, 20th June

Please make a note in your diaries that the Society is planning to, once again, participate in this year's Civic Day events which are being held throughout the country. Civic Voice are encouraging local civic societies to get involved in this national event and I encourage our members to go along to our local event on Saturday, 20th June 2020 and give their support to the Society in its endeavours. This year, we are planning to again steward 12 Arthur Road, Cliftonville. Full details of our event, including hours of opening, will be published in the Summer Newsletter and on the Society's website www.margatecivicsociety.org.uk. □

Pamela Pople
Chairman



Pen and ink drawing of the Tudor House by William Crawford. This charming image was used on the front of the Mayor of Margate's official Christmas card in 1964

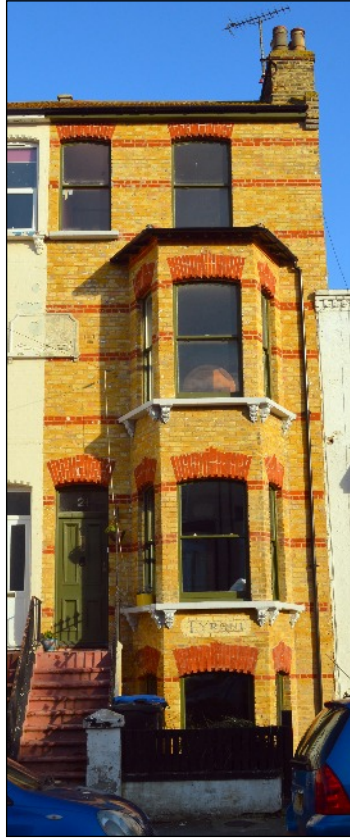
Nominations for Town Pride Awards 2020



This year, the Society received the following thirteen nominations for Town Pride Awards:



Ethelbert House, 21 Fort Crescent, Cliftonville



21 Sweyn Road, Cliftonville



The Kitchen, 3 Cliff Terrace, Cliftonville



97 Sea Road, Westgate-on-Sea



44 Royal Esplanade, Westbrook



Rendezvous Margate, 16 Ethelbert Crescent, Cliftonville



Westgate Galleria, 21 Station Road, Westgate-on-Sea

Nominations for Town Pride Awards 2020

continued



The Margate School, 33 High Street, Margate



The Black Gallery, 16-18 High Street, Margate



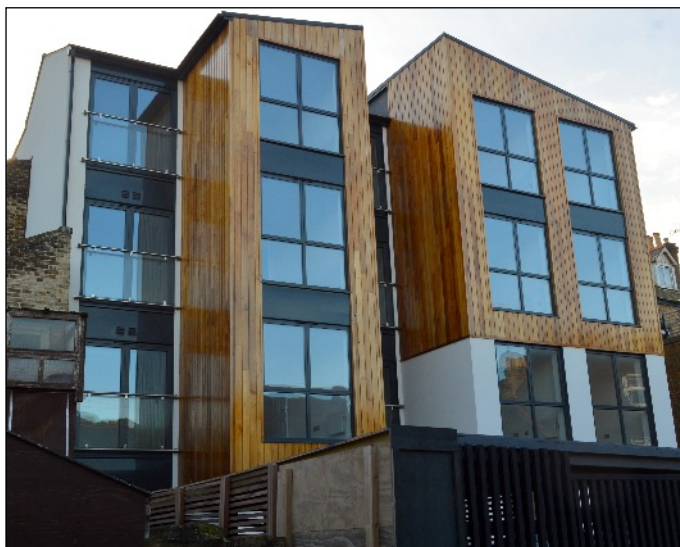
64 Edgar Road, Cliftonville



Westbrook House, 145 Canterbury Road, Westbrook



Margate Caves Visitor Centre, 1 Northdown Road, Cliftonville



(rear of new building on Carroway's Place)



(front of new building on Addington Road)

7-11 Addington Road, Margate

The results of the judging for the Society's 2020 Town Pride Awards will be announced at our meeting to be held on Thursday, 14th May 2020 when presentations of the Awards will be made to the winners. □

The sad story of the K6 telephone kiosk that once stood on the Stone Pier

The red K6 telephone kiosk that stood on the Stone Pier (known by some as the Harbour Arm) for nearly a decade was unceremoniously removed from its location on 16th January 2020 following complaints about its condition and misuse as a toilet.

The kiosk was re-located from Norfolk Road to the Stone Pier early in 2010 by Margate Charter Trustees under British Telecom's 'adopt a kiosk' scheme. The kiosk had fallen into disuse at Norfolk Road and Margate Charter Trustees decided to adopt the kiosk for just £1 under BT's scheme. Initially, Margate Charter Trustees had wanted to erect it as a decommissioned telephone kiosk outside the Old Town Hall but it was finally agreed that it should be relocated on the Stone Pier. Sadly, although the kiosk was placed in a prominent position on the Stone Pier, it became badly vandalised with many of the panes of glass broken and graffiti sprayed over it within a short time. It was repainted in 2011 and for a period was an attractive architectural feature within Margate Conservation Area. Sadly, the vandalism and misuse continued despite valiant endeavours to upkeep the kiosk.

The kiosk has featured in our Newsletter on numerous occasions recording the ups and downs of its condition.

It is understood that The Margate Harbour Arm Company agreed to be responsible for maintaining the kiosk once Margate Charter Trustees had adopted the kiosk and had it relocated to the Grade II listed Stone Pier.

In January 2020, *The Isle of Thanet News* reported that Thanet District Council had received written complaints about the poor condition of the kiosk and that TDC had contacted those responsible for the upkeep of the kiosk giving them the option to improve its appearance by removing the graffiti and rubbish or the kiosk would be removed. As can be seen from the last photograph below, the kiosk was duly removed in January and the hole in which it was standing has been filled in. It is understood that the kiosk was subsequently sold.

When it was in Norfolk Road, the kiosk was the last K6 remaining in Margate. Unlike the two K6s at Birchington, it was never listed at Grade II as being of architectural or historical interest. Although the K6 design dates from 1935 (it was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott), the K6 that stood on the Stone Pier bore the Queen's Crown thus dating it from 1953.

There is, however, a happy ending - of sorts - to this story for the Dalby Square Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme acquired another K6 in 2019 which has now been installed in Dalby Square as an architectural feature and is cared for by the A Better Cliftonville group. This K6 (see bottom right) bears the King's Crown which dates it from 1935-1953. Perhaps endeavours should be made to have this kiosk listed although its listing will not guarantee that it will not be subject to the vandalism and misuse that the one on the Stone Pier, unfortunately, experienced. □ JB



Showing the K6 outside the Norfolk Hotel in Norfolk Road - March 2006



The K6 after the demolition of the Norfolk Hotel - March 2010



Showing the relocated K6 on the Stone Pier - June 2010



Showing the K6 on the Stone Pier - February 2011



Showing the renovated K6 on the Stone Pier - April 2011

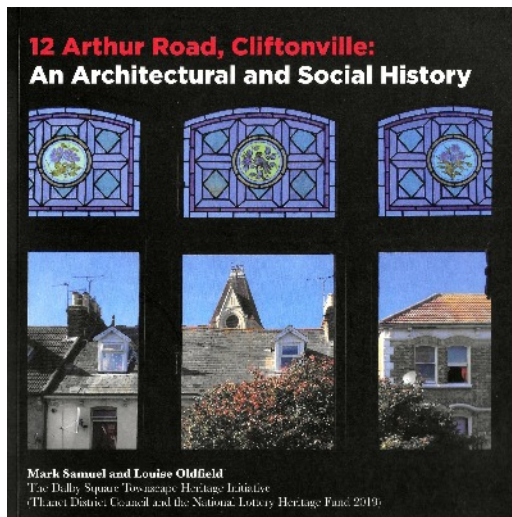


The site of the former K6 on the Stone Pier - February 2020

This photo shows Steve Bedington and Louise Oldfield in the process of attaching the information plaque to the K6 kiosk that was installed in Dalby Square in 2019. The kiosk makes an ideal structure to support the information plaque. It also adds another architectural feature to Dalby Square and further enhances the area. Do look out for it when you are next in Dalby Square or visiting 12 Arthur Road nearby. Louise Oldfield co-wrote the highly-recommended booklet on 12 Arthur Road which is reviewed elsewhere in this Newsletter.



Book Review



12 Arthur Road: An Architectural and Social History by Mark Samuel and Louise Oldfield published in softback by The Dalby Square Townscape Heritage Initiative (Thanet District Council and the National Lottery Heritage Fund 2019) - 72pp fully illustrated with many of the illustrations in colour. A limited number of copies of this book will be available for purchase at £5.00 each at meetings of Margate Civic Society and at 12 Arthur Road on both Civic Day (Saturday, 20th June) and - stocks permitting - during Heritage Open Days (HODs) in September (dates when 12 Arthur Road will be open over HODs have yet to be determined but will be published in the summer and autumn issues of our Newsletter).

This is a most interesting book which tells the story of 12 Arthur Road in the context of the development of Cliftonville and of the life of the house's owners over many years and particularly that of its first owner, Emanuel Levy, since 1895. Many of our members will have visited the house on dates when Margate Civic Society has stewarded the building and will be familiar with its many architectural impressive features. The book contains numerous plans showing the development of the Dalby Square area and makes for fascinating reading. Part of the book is devoted to the Jewish communities of London and Margate which played a large part in the development of Cliftonville.

12 Arthur Road was the deserved winner of the Society's Town Pride Award in 2018.

This book is highly recommended and, at only £5.00 a copy is excellent value for money. Stocks of the book are limited so do not delay in purchasing a copy in order to avoid disappointment. □ **JB**



The Town Pride Award plaque can be seen to the left of the ground-floor bay-window nearest the camera

Where is George Park?



The impressive plaque at the junction of Canterbury Road and George V Avenue (Photo taken in April 2010)

At the February meeting of the Westgate & Westbrook Residents' Association, reference was made to further tree-planting at various locations in Margate including what was referred to as George Park. On enquiry as to where George Park is in Margate, the reply given was that it is the green bounded by Canterbury Road, Waverley Road and George V Avenue. Furthermore it was stated that this area of land is shown on Google Maps as George Park. Well, the name probably derives from being adjacent to George V Avenue but it seems odd that the 'V' should be dropped from the King's name particularly as, at Ramsgate, the grounds of the former home of Sir Moses Montefiore are known today as King George VI Memorial Park. Surely, a better name for 'George Park' would be 'George V Green'.

Anyway, on my return home I decided to take a look at Google Maps to see whether the public open space adjacent to King George V Avenue was shown thereon as George Park and found, to my surprise, that indeed it was. It seems strange to refer to the plot of land as a park when its area is only a few acres. Dane Park, Hartsdown Park, Tivoli Park and Northdown Park are what are unquestionably parks as they fully satisfy the dictionary definition of a park as being a large enclosed piece of land for public recreation.

Margate is very fortunate to have a good number of parks and numerous areas of public open space but to designate a relatively small area of public open space as being a park is perhaps a tad disingenuous. What do other members of our Society think? □ **JB**



A close-up of the plaque showing the wording on it

The "Victory" Lugger/Northern Belle Memorial Tablet - Update



Photo taken on 27th April 2013

The "Victory" Lugger/Northern Belle Memorial Plaque has featured in our Newsletter a number of times in recent years. The current memorial, which was unveiled on Saturday, 27th April 2013, replaced an earlier memorial of the same shape that had stood in exactly for many years on the same position on the Stone Pier and just a few feet away from Droit House.

The memorial is very exposed to the weather and, over the years, much of its lettering has become illegible. Indeed, only two years after the replacement memorial had been unveiled, some of its lettering could not be read easily. A photograph of it at that time was published in our Autumn 2015 Newsletter (No. 380). In the following Newsletter, it was reported that: "we are very pleased to report that work to the tablet was carried out only a few days after publication of the Newsletter and the lettering is now clearly legible. This is an important memorial table which commemorates the the disastrous loss of the "Victory" Lugger in 1857 with the loss of nine lives".

Sadly, a recent inspection of the memorial revealed that the lettering on the memorial is now in a worse state than it has ever been despite the lettering having been repainted less than five years ago.

The accompanying three photographs of the memorial show how the lettering on it has suffered so badly that it now needs to be repainted again.

This is an important memorial in Margate's seafaring history and its present sorry state does not reflect well on the town. The memorial is passed by everyone who walks along the Stone Pier to admire the wonderful vista of Margate as it is in such a prominent position.

Let's hope that its lettering will be once again be repainted (perhaps with a higher-quality and longer-lasting paint) and that arrangements will be made for the lettering to be regularly maintained in the future by whoever owns it in order that it can be read easily by visitors to our town. □

JB

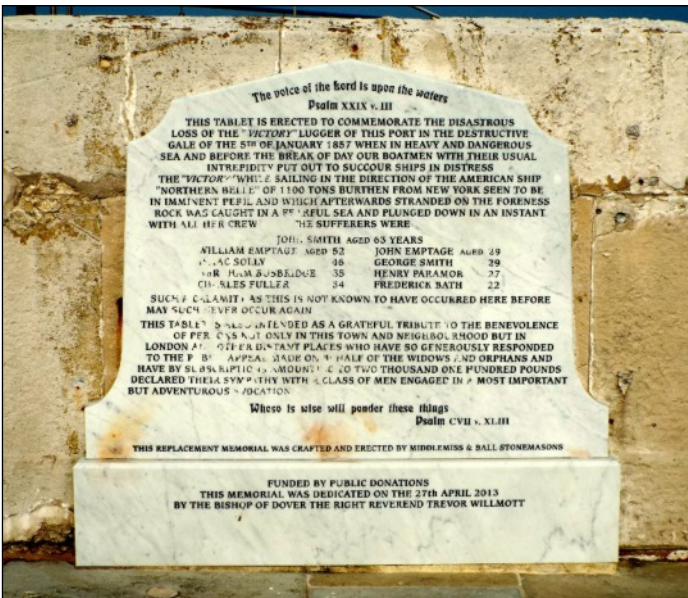


Photo taken on 18th March 2015 before it was repainted later that year



Photo taken on 12th February 2020



The Bishop of Dover, The Rt Rev Trevor Willmott, with Craig Mackinlay; the Mayor of Margate, Cllr Will Scobie (at rear wearing the tricorne hat); and the Mayor of Broadstairs, Cllr David Saunders, at the unveiling of the memorial on 27th April 2013

Margate Civic Society

Our Spring 2020 coach trip **OSTEND** at Anchor



Friday 29th May

Leave Margate 6.45am

Travel via Eurotunnel

Six hours in Ostend

TICKET PRICE £34

Ostend at Anchor is a well-established maritime event held in the harbour at Ostend.

150 sailing vessels Street entertainment
Food and drink stalls Processions & bands
Search & Rescue demonstrations
Ostend shopping and restaurants

Optional drop off and pick up after two hours at the Atlantic Wall Museum, Ostend (admission fee not included).

Coach pick-ups at Wheatsheaf, Clock Tower, Hussar, Summerlands and Birchington Square

Tickets on sale at our meetings or contact Mike Wilton on (01843) 844717 or email treasurer@margatecivicsociety.org.uk

If you purchase a ticket and subsequently are unable to travel, we will refund the full price if we are able to re-sell it. If we are unable to re-sell it, we will refund 50% of the price.



OUR FORTHCOMING COACH TRIP TO OSTEND

Members will be aware that we have had to change the date of the May trip to Ostend, because of Carol Peters, our chosen coach hire company, going out of business in January. Fortunately, we were able to re-book with Loyalty Connections, another local company with a very good reputation, but they were unable to book with Eurotunnel on the day we had originally selected: Saturday 30th May. This was because that weekend, at the end of the Bank Holiday and half-term week, is a peak time for Eurotunnel. All shuttle crossings at the times we needed, outward and return, were fully booked and it appears that Carol Peters had not booked for us so we couldn't take those slots. Our options were to change the day, to the previous day, Friday 29th May; to travel by ferry instead; or to cancel the trip altogether and look for a different venue. We were travelling to Ostend to enjoy the "Ostend at Anchor" marine festival and we still wanted to see that, so we didn't want to cancel the trip. To get the most time on the Continent, we prefer to travel by Eurotunnel rather than ferry. So that left the decision to change to the Friday, so that we can still enjoy the festival. I know that this has meant that some members have had to cancel their tickets and, of course, we regret this. But I think this was the best option to recover from a difficult position.

Since our first coach trip, to Greenwich in May 2014, we have arranged eleven coach trips, to destinations including Dunkirk, Bruges (who can forget that one!), Arras, Ypres, Sheffield Park and London. For all those trips, we have

used the Carol Peters coach hire company and they have always proved to be efficient, friendly and professional, with comfortable coaches and helpful drivers. We were very sorry to hear that they had run into financial difficulties and had to close down and, of course, we think of the drivers and other staff who have lost their livelihood.

We still have plenty of room for the Ostend trip to fill the 55-seater coach, so if any member or their family and friends want to come along, please contact me – my contact details are on the back page of this Newsletter.

Mike Wilton

New £20 note issued 20.02.2020

By now, most of our members will have handled the new £20 polymer note which was released for general circulation on 20th February and will have noticed the finely detailed metallic images of Margate lighthouse and Turner Contemporary in the shiny foil on the front of the note. The new £20 note also features a likeness of JMW Turner and an image of Turner's classic painting *The Fighting Temeraire*. The lighthouse featured on the note is the current lighthouse that was built in the 1950s to replace the one that was destroyed in the Great Storm of 31st January/1st February 1953. The new £20 note was designed by Debbie Marriott, the Bank of England's Chief Cashier. □

Remembering William (Bill) Crawford (1903-1985)

In 1986, Margate Civic Society mounted The William Crawford Memorial Exhibition in Margate library. The following text (in italics) has been copied from the leaflet that accompanied that Exhibition:

This is an Exhibition in memory of an artist whose keen eye and skilful hand captured, with great sensitivity, the character of historical old Margate.

Deeply treasured by those who have the good fortune to own them, his drawings and pictures evoke the old enchantments, the long-cherished pleasures, the home-grown treats, which enrich the memory of youthful experiences.

It was the destiny of Bill Crawford of Newcastle to bring into charming focus so much of old Margate which is harmonious and appropriate. Yet in his early days that destiny was elusive and unpredictable. For him there was not to be the usual delicate cultivation of perception, sensibility and artistic intelligence through school and art college.

Yes, he was the son of an artist and wood-carver, and would have had at least a yearning to follow his father's craft. But at school he was bottom of the art class, and at 14 he went to work as a clerk for Newcastle Corporation.

He must have persisted with his drawing, though, because later on he was employed by the Corporation as a draughtsman, but of what quality we don't know. There are some North Country drawings of his in this exhibition but they seem to have the surer touch of his later years.

With plucky assurance - or perhaps apocalypse minded - at the age of 42, and after 28 years of humdrum office life, he drew out his superannuation money and took to the road. Sleeping rough, odd-jobbing by day, he wandered the country, drawing, drawing, drawing.

"I hungered then" he wrote, and relates being in London's Lincoln's Inns Fields with 2½d, which he spent on a loaf of bread. That was the period when, stubbornly and wilfully, Bill Crawford's art flowered.

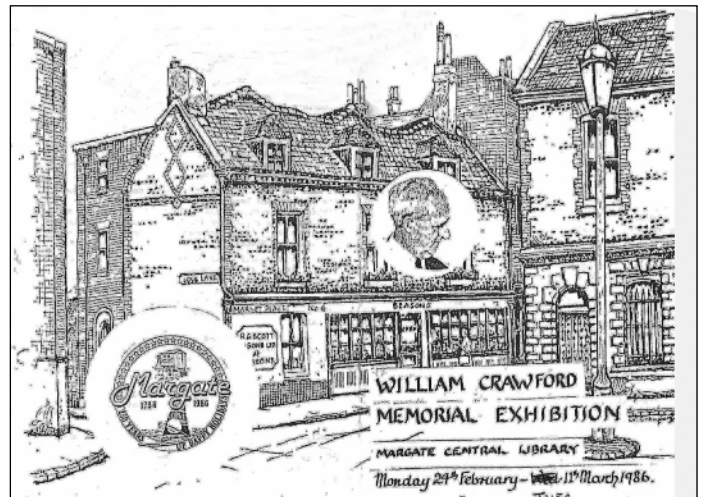
In 1947 he settled in Margate under the cherishing wing of Mrs Marjorie Maples and her late husband, but got a job as night-watchman in London and travelled up and down each day for the next twelve years.

"I made the train my bedroom" he once said, "and drew in the daytime, and became well-known in Margate for historical drawing and old buildings." That was in addition to his growing reputation for London drawings; as he describes them, "City churches, up alleyways, etc., and famous London scenes."

So it was that Bill Crawford came to make regular safari through Margate streets, pencil in hand spilling a little magic onto his drawing block. His drawings show his belief that simplest is still best. Not being engaged in the pursuit of mere prettiness, he presented his scenery with a gust of sympathy which was yet hardly ever sentimental.

Diffidently sincere at heart, and gruffly good-humoured in manner, the persuasively accomplished Bill Crawford made many Margate friends, influenced many Margate People, and whetted with hard-won artistry our appreciation of this own town of ours.

*We cannot mourn him. Look around!
These are the flowers he brought us.*



The design on the front of the Margate Civic Society's William Crawford Memorial Exhibition leaflet

MARGATE CIVIC SOCIETY
presents
THE WILLIAM CRAWFORD MEMORIAL EXHIBITION
in the Gallery of
MARGATE CENTRAL LIBRARY
MONDAY 24 FEBRUARY to TUESDAY 11 MARCH 1986
WILLIAM PEMBERTON CRAWFORD
June 12th 1903 - December 28th 1985

The above text is copied from the original William Crawford Memorial Exhibition leaflet that was printed on a Gestetner duplicating machine in 1986. Note that the exhibition was organised by Margate Civic Society.

Sincere thanks to Richard Clements for very kindly allowing reproduction of his copy of the Memorial Exhibition leaflet



A drawing by Bill Crawford of the former Lloyds Bank in Station Road, Westgate-on-Sea. The drawing is dated 1967 and was presented by the artist to the manager of the bank in the 1970s. The bank manager's daughter, Marion Simpson (a long-time member of our Society), very kindly allowed your Editor to photograph the drawing for inclusion in our Newsletter

Bill Crawford's drawing of The Old Town Hall, Margate was reproduced on page 9 of our Autumn 2019 Newsletter (No. 396)

Former local resident restores Public Shelter at St Mildred's Bay

The public shelters along the coast from Minnis Bay to Palm Bay were undoubtedly hugely popular to visitors to Birchington, Westgate-on-Sea and Margate - particularly to those holiday-makers who were staying in bed-and-breakfast accommodation. The shelters contained seats and were glazed in such a way that, whatever direction the wind was blowing from, the glazing afforded protection from the wind - which, as we all know - is a feature of the north Kent coast particularly during the winter months!

One of the earliest public shelters in our area that still exists is the one situated on the headland at St Mildred's Bay. It is believed to have been built in the late-1880s and to have been designed by Charles Moxon, an architect who lived at Beach Cliff on Sea Road. Beach Cliff later became part of the Ivyside Hotel which was demolished in the 1980s and replaced by San Remo Apartments. It has been suggested that Charles Moxon might well have met the cost of the construction of the St Mildred's Bay shelter himself but no evidence has yet been uncovered to confirm that.

The shelter, when originally built, contained reinforced glass (probably to protect it from damage caused by the strong winds) and it is believed that its roof was tiled with Kent Pegs.

The accompanying photos show how the shelter has changed in its appearance over the last 15 years. The top photo shows how it looked in 2005 which probably was not a lot different from how it looked when built in the 1880s. The second photo shows how, by 2010, the shelter had been repainted by TDC but had all of its windows removed thus denying the shelter of its primary purpose - to provide shelter from the wind.

The third photo shows how the shelter had deteriorated between 2010 and 2019 with much of the paint having worn off and even some of the woodwork falling off.

The fourth photo shows how the shelter has been restored to much of its former glory, not by TDC but by a former resident, Mike Wiseman, whose family used to own and run the Ivyside Hotel in Sea Road for many years before it was demolished. Sadly, a few of the shelter's windows were broken by vandals shortly after the windows had been fitted but they have since been replaced and it is hoped that the shelter will not be subject to any further vandalism.



Mike Wiseman at work restoring the shelter
- July 2019

Mike Wiseman, with a few friends, has renovated this shelter at their own expense. Mike Wiseman has plans to restore the roof to its original state and we wish him every success with his endeavours to fully restore this wonderful old shelter.

Note: Westgate-on-Sea Town Council is currently seeking to have this shelter transferred to it by TDC in the near future. □

JB



October 2005



October 2010



April 2019



November 2019
What a transformation!

The Margate Caves (formerly known as The Vortigern Caves)

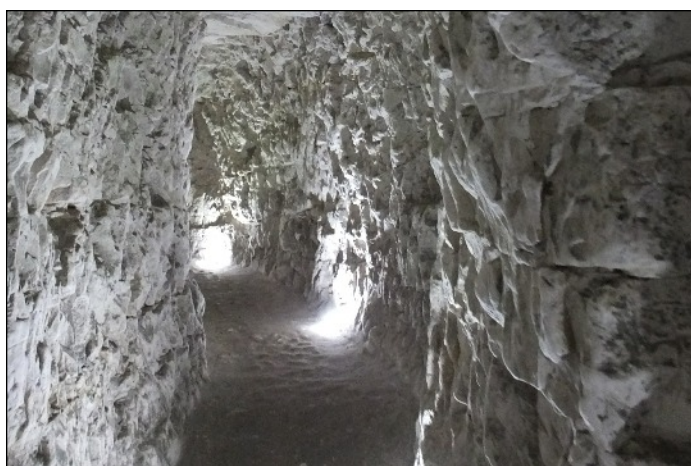
It is believed by some that the Caves date from Saxon times but the story of the Caves (as we know them today) began with a man of eccentric habits, named Frederick Forster, building for himself towards the end of the eighteenth century a large red-brick house which he named Northumberland House. In 1798, his gardener, when digging behind the house, made the discovery of the Caves. In 1863, the Caves were turned into a show-place as The Vortigern Caves. It is possible that the original murals (wall-paintings) were created at around that time by a man named Brazier (no relation to your Editor!). In 1907, Canon Michael Pryor, Vicar of Holy Trinity Church, constructed some stairs from the grounds of Holy Trinity Church down into the Caves and is believed to have carried out extensive works to the Caves. The Caves were used as an air-raid shelter during the First World War and were closed as a show-place to the public in 1938 only to be used as an air-raid shelter again during the Second World War. In 1958, the Caves were re-opened as a show-place until 2004 when they were closed, reputedly, for health-and-safety reasons. Since 2011, a group of campaigners who were determined to save the Caves successfully attracted major funding from the Big Lottery Fund and the Heritage Lottery Fund, boosted by lots of local fundraising including a Secret Postcard Auction and a Crowdfunder campaign. The money raised enabled the The Margate Caves Community Education Trust (TMCCET) and the Friends of Margate Caves to contract geo-technical engineers to conserve the Caves and ensure that the Caves conform to all modern health-and-safety criteria, while a specialist conservator has brought the site's vibrant murals back to life, undoing years of damage. The Caves were re-opened in August 2019 to much acclaim.



The dramatic exterior of the new Visitor Centre housing a community cafe, a shop, a meeting room and the entrance to the recently restored Caves. The building is on Northdown Road adjacent to Trinity Square

Margate Caves have a chequered history and their origin remains a mystery but there can be little doubt that their future has been preserved as a consequence of the works that have been carried out over the past few years. Although your correspondent has lived the greater part of his life in Margate, he readily admits to never having visited the Caves until he decided to go along and take a

look at the Caves with his trusty camera in early December 2019. He had attended a most interesting lecture the previous month in the new meeting-room at the back of the new Visitor Centre and, in so doing, had taken the opportunity to visit the community cafe and the shop. He had been most impressed on that occasion and wanted to return to the Visitor Centre at the earliest opportunity. On his subsequent visit to the Caves, he was even more impressed by what he saw. Staffed by volunteers, he was immediately welcomed once he had descended the flight of stairs to gain access to the Caves. After walking a short distance through what can best be described as a tunnel, he entered the Caves proper and was astounded by the sheer size of the Caves and by the extent of the up-lighting that has been installed to make a visit such a memorable experience. He had not expected the Caves to be so enormous and at different levels which made the Caves that much more interesting. The 200-year-odd wall-paintings had clearly been re-painted but he did not feel that their re-painting had detracted from their appeal. During his visit, he took a number of photographs (some



The tunnel leading into the Caves from the bottom of the stairs



Some of the wall murals near the tunnel entrance into the Caves



Depiction of the Thanet Hunt showing a fox being closely pursued by a pack of hounds



Vortigern, King of the Britons

of which accompany this short article) and discussed the likely origin of the caves with one of the very helpful volunteers in attendance during his visit.

Until such time as an updated booklet telling the history is published for visitors to the Caves, members should read George E. Clarke's chapter on The Vortigern Caves in his book *Historic Margate* (published 1957) and the small booklet entitled *The Margate Caves* which was based on George E. Clarke's writings and which was probably published in 1958 when Margate Corporation re-opened the Caves. (George E. Clarke was for many years the town's Borough Librarian and he wrote extensively in the 1950s on aspects of Margate's rich history.)

If you haven't visited the Visitor Centre, you are strongly recommended to do so for the Caves are one of Margate's "hidden gems". They thoroughly deserve support and should not be missed by anyone - whether resident of the town or visitor to the town. □ **JB**



GOD BLESS THE KING - KING GEORGE III "FARMER" 1798



Two Napoleonic soldiers on guard



The Virgin Mary (note the graffiti on the chalk walls)



Showing the height of the Caves



Crocodile



Hippopotamus



A selection of graffiti to be found inside the Caves is shown on this page



Monkeys



Lion



Fox



Elephant



Rearing horse



R.I.P.



Donkey

Yet another change at Westgate-on-Sea Town Council

The holding of the many by-elections since 2015 at Westgate-on-Sea for vacancies as councillors for Westgate-on-Sea Town Council has been commented on a number of occasions in our Newsletter. The last time was in the Autumn 2019 Newsletter (No. 396) when it was reported that Robert Micallef had stated last July that he wished to resign his position after serving only nine months as a councillor on the Town Council. The vacancy resulting from his resignation was finally announced towards the end of 2019 and local residents were invited to submit nominations to fill the vacancy. Two nominations were submitted and, because not less than ten electors in the area had requested an election to be held, it was duly announced that a by-election to fill the vacancy would be held on 13th February 2020. The two candidates were Timothy Green and Penelope Wells. The result of the by-election was announced the following day when it was reported that Timothy Green had been duly elected as a councillor for the Town Council having polled just 228 votes. It has to be said that the turnout for this by-election was just 7.17% which indicates the level of interest throughout Westgate in that by-election. The turnout for the last by-election held at Westgate in February 2017 was 17% and at the one before that, just 16%. The latest turnout of 7.17% must have been terribly disappointing for the two candidates as it demonstrates the level of apathy throughout the town in the activities of the Town Council.

The total costs to date of holding the various elections and by-elections in Westgate since 2015 for the Town Council must surely be considerably well in excess of £10,000. The total number of votes cast in the last by-election was only 401 out of an electorate of 5,659. It cannot have taken long to count so few votes but it must be questioned whether the costs of hiring two polling stations, printing the voting papers and other stationery required, employing staff for the day of election at two polling stations and then employing further staff to count the 401 votes was really good use of public money. It will be interesting to see how long the recently-elected councillor remains in post!

And yet the campaign to create a Town Council for Margate to replace the existing Margate Charter Trustees still continues apace. Indeed, it is even rumoured that there is a wish for a separate Town Council to be created for Cliftonville in addition to a Town Council created for the remainder of Margate, i.e. Margate Central, Westbrook, Salmestone and Garlinge. One only has to look at the resultant costs of creating a Town Council for Westgate-on-Sea to see how the costs of setting up and running two more Town Councils will impact on the level of Council Tax paid in those areas. Do the council taxpayers of Margate really want that? □

JB

Walks led by Robin Colyer - 2020

Robin Colyer, one of our Society's Vice-Presidents, has very kindly offered to lead the following walks all starting at Droit House at 2.00pm:

Date

- Saturday, 11th April (Easter) Cliftonville Walk (new)
- Sunday, 24th May Old Town Walk
- Saturday, 20th June (Civic Day) West of The Brooks Walk (including All Saints Church)
- Saturday, 25th July Old Town Walk
- Saturday, 29th August Six Squares Walk
- Sunday, 13th September (Heritage Open Days)
- Saturday, 19th September (Heritage Open Days)

The following tours of St John's Church starting at 2.30pm are also planned:

Date

- Saturday, 23rd May
- Saturday, 12th September

Robin has led these walks around Margate and tours of St John's Church for a number of years and they are highly recommended



Robin Colyer

Margate Town Deal

Members will be aware that Margate has been selected as one of the 101 towns to benefit from injections of up to £25 million from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Thanet District Council is to devise a Panel (composition unknown) to choose a Chair – an independent business person to head up a Board that should include a strong community element. An Investment Plan is to be published in the autumn.

MCS fully expects to be represented on that Board – as will other civic societies in their own towns of course. We are at the heart of communities and 'town pride' (this from the Civic Voice Manifesto).

TDC has been reminded that we already have a Margate Economic Plan as approved both by TDC and the Ministry. This had to be submitted for the Coastal Community Fund and 'de-ghosting' the High Street was the priority. This was how we come to see signs of infant life at The Margate School.

It was disappointing not to have been preferred over Ramsgate for the Future High Streets Fund (no invitation to a constructive 'brainstorming' dialogue taken up and no reasons given for the choice – were *'they'* too embarrassed perchance?) However, we always suspected that further development funds would appear for the 'left behind' and here they now are.

The Town Deal's main focus is, unsurprisingly, on employment support: there are serious concerns about the effect of this new phenomenon called 'online' which hasn't really permeated the Local Plan. Low-skill areas (such as Thanet) are especially vulnerable to technological redundancies (up to 30% job loss according to the Bank of England and the majority losers will be female).

Which means continuing to promote our town as a place where there is always something new going on. In the shortish term this means reinforcing what we already have

as 'work in progress' and encouraging the wealth of small creatives. In the longer term: growing attractions to cater for all those new hotels to persuade visitors to stay for a few days. The Margate School's importance in regeneration is even more central than it was five years ago as the need for 'upskilling' has increased exponentially – and our creative industries have continued to cluster. 'Culture is the Future'.

We have the resources to exploit our neglected heritage potential (Old Town Hall, Royal Sea Bathing Chapel), conference potential (Winter Gardens) and even 'back to roots' thalassotherapy* at the Lido and 'townscaping' the Northdown Road as has been an earlier aspiration. Hastings has its 'Greenway' and the Thanet Destination Management overhaul should recognise the 'health and wellbeing' prospects of our own 'Coastal Park' (so renovate shelters and information boards). The Government rather hopes that private capital investment will then be further encouraged. Result: happiness and bliss all round.

Under new TDC leadership we are promised transparency and collaboration – we live in hope that fine words may yet butter parsnips and the message is finally getting through to Cecil Square and a better chapter in community relations started.

Who knows – we may even restore Andrews Passage to the community – and start to plan for the 70th anniversary of Her Majesty's Accession with a restored Time Ball?

Geoff Orton
Secretary

Editor's note:

*Thalassotherapy is the use of seawater as a form of therapy. It is based on the systematic use of seawater, sea products, and shore climate. Practitioners claim the properties of seawater have beneficial effects upon the pores of the skin. - *Wikipedia*

More of William (Bill) Crawford's fine drawings of Margate



What's On

Margate Civic Society (talks all start at 7.30pm at the Walpole Bay Hotel, Fifth Avenue, Cliftonville)

Guests: £3.00 nominal fee (unless otherwise specified)

Date	Subject
2020	
5th March	'Rogues, Rascals and Rebels' by Chris McCooey (Freelance Writer and Speaker) followed by Raffle Draw
2nd April	'The Early Days of Westgate-on-Sea' by Sally Whitworth, MCS Membership Secretary and Westgate-on-Sea Heritage Centre Newsletter Editor. A talk about the area before the town was built and the people who helped create what was to become an upmarket Victorian watering-hole. Please note that, during the evening and, prior to the raffle, there will be a request for donations towards a WWII bench
14th May	Town Pride Awards (followed by raffle and refreshments) Guests: £4.50 nominal fee
1st October	Annual General Meeting followed by 'The History of Local Newspapers in Thanet, by Jodie Nesling, Journalist and Co-owner of <i>The Isle of Thanet News</i> (followed by raffle and refreshments) Guests: £4.50 nominal fee
5th November	'Bits That Don't Fit!' (Stand-up History! Weird and wonderful historical square pegs) by Steve Hookins (After-Dinner Speaker, historical presentations) followed by a collection for Cancer Research UK prior to our Raffle Draw
10th December	'The Goose is Getting Fat! The History of Christmas Traditions' by Imogen Corrigan (Lecturer on Anglo-Saxon & Medieval History of Art) followed by music, refreshments and Christmas Raffle Draw. Guests: £6.50 nominal fee



Westgate-on-Sea Heritage Centre -Summer Programme 2020

From 2nd May to 29th August, the Heritage Centre at the back of St Saviour's Church will be open every Saturday from 10.00am to 12 noon and every Wednesday from 11.00am to 1.00pm.

On the first Saturday of each month, a talk will be given at 10.30am as listed below. All are welcome

Date	Subject
2020	
7th March	Annual General Meeting followed by a short talk by member Karl Troop on how he was inspired to do research on Christopher Moor (the chandelier in the Memorial Chapel is in his memory) and his family, following a chance encounter with a member of the Moor family at the Heritage Centre in 2019
4th April	Illustrated talk prepared by Dr Dawn Crouch based on recent research. "The changing face of Westgate south of the A28 after the Second World War"
2nd May	Illustrated talk by James Brazier - "The story of how Margate eventually 'swallowed-up' Westgate and Birchington in 1935 to become Greater Margate; and the Beating the Bounds ceremony held on 1st April 1935 to mark that historic occasion"
6th June	"We have a story to tell" Part III "From Sitzkreig to Blitzkreig" - based on stories told by local people and on original archives. Hear how the evacuation from Dunkirk in the last week of May affected Thanet and led to the evacuation of schoolchildren to Staffordshire on Sunday, 2nd June 1940. Script by Dr Dawn Crouch read by members of the Heritage Centre
4th July	Illustrated talk by Dr Dawn Crouch - "The Growth of South Westgate" Part II: from 1960 to today
1st August	Illustrated talk by Sally Whitworth and Colin Osborne "Summer Sport in Westgate" - Westgate's tennis and cricket tournaments in August were well-known and popular annual events

Come and browse through our collection of material and photographs of Westgate, which is growing all the time. We have large-scale maps and plans which reveal great detail about your street or area

Margate Civic Society

www.margatecivicsociety.org.uk

Supported by



Founded in 1968, the Margate Civic Society is a registered charity and a founder member of Civic Voice. It was also both an affiliated member of the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies and a member of the Kent History Federation but, sadly, both those organisations have recently been wound up.

The Society's purpose and aims are to encourage high standards of architecture and town planning in Margate and its environs (Birchington, Westgate-on-Sea, Cliftonville, Westbrook, Garlinge, Acol, Sarre and St Nicholas-at-Wade); to stimulate public interest and care for the history and character of the area; and to encourage the preservation, development and improvement of features of general amenity and historical interest. To this end, Town Pride awards are given annually to those buildings which have been refurbished, cleaned or modified and which, in the opinion of the Society, have enhanced the appearance of the town. New high-quality buildings are also eligible for the award. The Society also vets planning applications and makes known to Thanet District Council any objections to those applications which it considers necessary.

Evening meetings are held monthly between October and May at the Walpole Bay Hotel, Fifth Avenue, Cliftonville. The lectures, mostly digitally illustrated, are interesting and of local interest; they are also varied in their appeal. A Newsletter is published four times a year.

Committee for 2019/20:

President: Mr Ralph Handscomb, 14 Eastern Esplanade, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 3AB (Tel: 01843 293169)
(e-mail: handscomb@talktalk.net)

Chairman: Mrs Pamela Pople, Hurston Cottage, Sloe Lane, Westwood, Margate CT9 4DX (Tel: 01843 221689)
(e-mail: pamela@hurstoncottage.co.uk)

Vice-Chairman: Mr Harry Scobie, 59 Gloucester Avenue, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 3NP (Tel: 078 6227 6466)
(e-mail: harryscobie@hotmail.com)

Secretary: Mr Geoff Orton, 25 Norman Road, Westgate-on-Sea CT8 8RR (Tel: 01843 835085)
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Treasurer: Mr Mike Wilton, 30 Barrington Crescent, Birchington CT7 9DF (Tel: 01843 844717)
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Membership Secretary: Ms Sally Whitworth, C/o 25 Norman Road, Westgate-on-Sea CT8 8RR (Tel: 07949 835777)
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Newsletter Editor: Mr James Brazier, "The Moorings", 25 Barnes Avenue, Westbrook, Margate CT9 5EQ
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(Tel: 01843 832834) (e-mail: mike.thompson6565@btinternet.com)

If you are interested in joining our Society, please fill in the enrolment form below:

✂

Enrolment/Renewal Form

I enclose the sum of £

Name:

Address:

Tel: **e-mail:**

Subscription rates for 2019/20:

	Individual	Joint	Junior (under 18)	Corporate
	£	£	£	£
Annual (Paper Newsletter*)	13	17	5	–
Annual (Electronic Newsletter#)	10	14	2	20

Please note that Life Membership subscription is no longer available

and send it to the Membership Secretary, Ms Sally Whitworth, C/o 25 Norman Road, Westgate-on-Sea CT8 8RR

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